



# King County Councilmember **Bob Ferguson**

[www.metrokc.gov/ferguson](http://www.metrokc.gov/ferguson)

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

### District 1

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### *Dear Neighbors:*

Hurricane Katrina served as a wake-up call for our region. We must make sure we are prepared in the event of a natural disaster or flu pandemic. Watching the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina on television, I asked myself am I doing enough to help our community prepare for an emergency?

That is why immediately after Hurricane Katrina struck, I convened the Regional Policy Committee, a bipartisan group of elected officials from suburban cities, Seattle, and King County, to discuss emergency and disaster preparedness planning. The County has a regional role to unite local governments for this important work.

One of my top priorities for 2006 is ensuring King County is prepared to respond in the case of an emergency such as earthquake or pandemic flu.

My first town meeting of 2006 will focus on this important issue. We will discuss King County's emergency plan and what you can do to prepare your family. Eric Holdeman, Director of King County's Office of Emergency Management, will be our guest. I hope you can join us:

Tuesday, January 31, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.  
Meridian Park Elementary School Cafeteria  
17077 Meridian Avenue North in Shoreline

See you at the meeting!

*Bob*

Bob Ferguson



**King County**



# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

## Eric's Corner

### A Note from Eric Holdeman, King County Director of Emergency Management

Disaster preparedness is everyone's responsibility! I think that message was played out for us on our television screens as we watched the unfortunate events of Hurricane Katrina. There were plenty of "woulda, shoulda, coulda" comments being made by everyone involved. It was clear that many things that could have been done before the event had been left undone by many.



*Bob met with Eric Holdeman, King County Director of Emergency Management, to discuss emergency preparation. Eric Holdeman is a nationally recognized expert on emergency preparation.*

It is important to note that we also live in a high hazard area with our worst case natural disaster being an earthquake. However, unlike a hurricane, these earthquakes are "come as you are disasters" with no warning. The time for preparing is now.

I was pleased to hear that King County Councilmember Bob Ferguson is hosting a Town Meeting on Emergency Preparedness. I hope that you might take the time to attend this event in order to learn more about what King County and other governments are doing to prepare, and what you might do as citizens to prepare for disasters.

## For more information

Check out our website at [www.metrokc.gov/prepare](http://www.metrokc.gov/prepare) or contact (206) 296-3830 for information on hazards and preparedness tips. You can also visit [www.3days3ways.org](http://www.3days3ways.org) for a video presentation on preparedness.

## Regional Leaders Take Action

The King County Emergency Management Plan is for use by elected County officials to prepare, respond, and recover from natural and technological disasters such as an earthquake or a pandemic flu outbreak. The plan includes search and rescue, food and water, law enforcement, communications, and other vital emergency support functions.



In addition, King County created a Regional Disaster Plan for Public and Private Organizations in 2002 to unite representatives from businesses, nonprofits, hospitals, law enforcement, cities, and schools. This plan addresses sharing of resources during a disaster and provides the partnerships necessary for our region to respond.

I am committed to identifying any gaps we witnessed during Hurricane Katrina such as timely response, evacuation efforts, and coordination between local governments, and ensure these are resolved.

Without regional cooperation and communication, our emergency response efforts will be inadequate. Enhancing our current public communication structure and creating a seamless disaster plan for our community are the most important steps our regional governments can take to adequately prepare for a disaster.

## Preparation for Flu Pandemic Underway

A pandemic flu outbreak is a serious threat to our community. A major flu pandemic could infect 1.2 million King County residents within the first six weeks. King County is responsible for regional public health and ensuring we have the tools to be prepared in the event of a flu pandemic.

I recently supported a major County-wide effort to prepare for pandemic flu. The \$5.9 million plan includes expanded outreach, planning and funding for 119,000 courses of the antiviral medicine Tamiflu:

- Purchasing 57,000 courses of antiviral medicine for vulnerable populations such as seniors and youth.
- Purchasing 62,000 courses of antiviral medicine for first responders such as police, fire, and emergency medical services workers.
- Enhancing public education about flu prevention.
- Expanding local emergency communication.

While there is a vaccine for seasonal flu, it takes at least six months after the pandemic flu begins for a vaccine to be developed. Antiviral drugs can be used to treat severe cases, but are extremely limited in supply. To slow the spread of the flu outbreak,

schools, and public facilities may temporarily close. As vaccine supplies become available, King County will coordinate with regional partners to vaccinate the entire County population.

It is important to learn from our history responding and recovering from major natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina and the 1918 flu pandemic. I am currently reading a book on the 1918 flu pandemic and other materials to better understand how we can prepare our community in the event of a future pandemic outbreak.

### Preventing Seasonal Flu

October and November are the optimal months to receive a seasonal flu shot, but the vaccine can still be distributed in December and January depending on availability.

Contact your local pharmacy or public health center to check availability:

**North Public Health Center**  
10501 Meridian Avenue North in  
Seattle (206) 296-4765

**Northshore Public Health Center**  
10808 Northeast 145th Street in  
Bothell (206) 296-9816

## What is Pandemic Flu?

Pandemic flu is a global outbreak of a new type of flu virus. In the 20th century, there were three pandemics. The 1918 pandemic killed over 50 million humans, including 650,000 Americans.

Humans have little or no natural immunity to a new pandemic virus. As a result, a pandemic flu can spread rapidly causing outbreaks throughout the world, and could infect an estimated 30 percent of the U.S. population.

New human flu viruses arise from bird flu viruses that mutate to a form that can infect humans. The current bird flu outbreak in Asia is caused by a type of influenza A virus called "H5N1." The outbreak among domestic chickens and ducks in Asia is widespread and uncontrolled, even killing humans.

Health experts think the bird flu could mutate into a strain that would be spread from human to human, infecting millions. This is particularly worrisome for the Puget Sound region with our close connections to Asia.



# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

## King County Regional Communication and Emergency Coordination Center

I recently toured the King County Regional Communication and Emergency Coordination Center with Eric Holdeman, King County Director of Emergency Management. Built in 2003, the County's emergency center is located in Renton and regionally coordinates emergency planning and response efforts for King County. The facility includes the Sheriff's communications center as well as all County emergency management offices.

The focal point of the facility includes the coordination room which hosts radios, televisions, phones, and multiple computer work stations to adequately respond to damage assessment, facilitate public communication, and response efforts. The coordination room remains in an operational ready state at all times.

In the event of a disaster, the County Executive will relocate to the center to address policy issues and assist with response and recovery efforts.



***Bob toured the King County Regional Communication and Emergency Coordination Center with Eric Holdeman, King County Director of Emergency Management.***

  
**ACTION-GRAM**

***As your elected representative, I appreciate hearing your comments and concerns. Please fill out the form below, include postage, and mail. You can also email me at: [bob.ferguson@metrokc.gov](mailto:bob.ferguson@metrokc.gov).***

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

☐ I would like to be added to Bob's email news list.

## Your Emergency Supply Kit

Preparing your family in case of an emergency can save lives. As we witnessed with Hurricane Katrina, it could be several days before help reaches your home. Experts are now recommending you have at least one week of supplies on hand. It is also recommended that you put together small versions for the office, school, and car. Remember, emergency supply kits should be designed to fit your needs.

Here's an emergency supply kit list to get you started:

- Water: 1 gallon per person per day
- Food: non-perishable canned goods with can opener, granola bars, protein bars, "comfort" foods like cookies or hard candy
- NOAA Tone Alert Weather radio
- Extra set of clothes with sturdy shoes
- Flashlight with extra batteries or light stick
- Whistle
- First Aid kit including three-day supply of prescription drugs
- Entertainment items like a deck of cards
- Shelter-in-Place items like duct tape and plastic
- Cash: ATMs won't operate if power is out

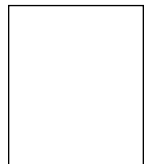


***Bob and his wife, Colleen, purchase water for their emergency kit. Bob and Colleen made it a priority over the holidays to put together a home emergency kit.***

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**Bob Ferguson**

**King County Councilmember**

**Room 1200**

**516 Third Avenue**

**Seattle, WA 98104**



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## Emergency Preparedness Town Meeting

*with guest Eric Holdeman,  
King County Director of Emergency Management*

**Tuesday, January 31  
7:00 - 8:30 p.m.**

Meridian Park Elementary  
17077 Meridian Avenue N.  
Shoreline 98133

*I hope you can join us!*

## COMMUNITY CONNECTION

## Volunteering at ROOTS Young Adult Shelter

My staff and I recently volunteered at ROOTS (Rising Out Of The Shadows) Young Adult Shelter in the University District. ROOTS provides a safe, emergency, overnight shelter to homeless young adults with evening and morning meals and service referrals. We prepared and served dinner to the community. To learn more about ROOTS, please visit [www.roots.org](http://www.roots.org) or contact (206) 632-1635.

Volunteer work is one of the most rewarding activities we do as an office. Once a month, my staff and I volunteer at a different organization in the district. If you know of a non-profit organization that can use our time and service, please contact my office at (206) 296-1001.



*Bob, his wife Colleen, and his staff recently volunteered at ROOTS Young Adult Shelter. They prepared and served dinner to the community.*